

# COWBOY STORIES FROM CANADA

Frank Carpenter Writes About the Cattle Country of the Great Northwest.

## BILLY COCHRANE'S BULL FIGHT

Second Sons of English Lords and Their Antics—How Gold-brick Man Took in Calgary.

By Frank G. Carpenter.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.) CALGARY, ALBERTA, March 11.—If you want to see a live frontier town, come to Calgary. It is the ranching capital of the Canadian cattle country, and it has for years been a sort of Rascally cure for the younger sons of English lords and dukes. Lying in western Canada, a hundred miles or so north of the American boundary, it is a sort of a cross between Denver and Cheyenne, peppered with the spits of Monte Carlo and London. There is no more sport town on the American continent. It is business from the word "go," but at the same time cowboys gallop through its streets, and fine-looking Englishmen in riding trousers, leather leggings and Norfolk jackets play polo on the outskirts.

There are a number of hotels, and every hotel has a well-patronized bar. There are two clubs, one known as "The Ranchers" and another as "The Albertas." The Ranchers' Club is largely composed of the sons of rich English families. It is independent and awfully swell. The Alberta Club is mostly business men, comprising the real estate dealers, merchants, wholesale and retail, and other prominent characters who want to make Calgary great. As for the Ranchers' they do not care a cent for Calgary, and are more interested in polo than politics.

### Remittance Men.

Among the characters of Calgary are the remittance men. They are the younger sons of wealthy or noble English families, who are out here to make their fortunes and grow up with the country. Some have come because their parents did not want them at home, and others because they liked the wild life of the prairie, which until recently has corresponded somewhat with Kipling's description of "the country east of Suez."

"Where the best is like the worst—Where there ain't no Ten Commandments, And you've got to raise a thirst."

These remittance men get so much money every month, or every quarter, and most of them spend it in drinking and carousing. Many are "under the wire," and they fall lower and lower, relying entirely on their remittances to keep them going. I know, for instance, the son of an English lord, whom you may see almost any day here hanging over the bar, and another who has dual blood in his veins, who will gladly borrow a quarter of you if he strikes you in the lean days prior to the next remittance.

### Billy Cochrane's Bullfight.

Others of these men keep themselves straight. They bring money with them, invest it and make it breed like Australian rabbits, but at the same time they are full of sport and spend freely. One of these is a son of an admiral of the British navy. His name is Cochrane, and he is said to have made a fortune of his own in ranching and other investments. He has one big range near Calgary on which he keeps 6,000 of the wildest of Canadian cattle. Every year or so he brings in a new installment of bulls from Scotland, giving his agents at home instructions to send him the wildest and fiercest animals that can be secured. When he was recently asked why he did this he replied:

"You see, I have to pay my cowboys so much a month, and I want to raise stock that will make them earn their wages. Besides, it adds to the life of the ranch."

"I went out to see Billy Cochrane the other day," said a Calgary banker to me last night. "When I arrived at the ranch I found him seated on the fence of one of his corrals watching a fight between two bulls. As he saw me he told me to hurry up and have a look."

I climbed to the fence beside him, and as I watched the struggle going on beneath, I said: "Why, Billy, if you do not separate those bulls one will soon kill the other." "Let them kill," was the reply. "This is the real thing. It is better than any Spanish bull fight and I would give a bull any day to see it."

"Well, we watched the struggle for an hour, Cochrane clapping his hands and urging his bulls on to battle. Finally one drove his horns into the side of the other, and killed it. Upon my extreme surprise at this wanton waste of valuable live stock, Cochrane said: 'Oh! it don't matter at all. We have got to have some sport. We must have something to add to the life of the ranch.'"

The stories of how some of these re-

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mittance men take in their parents are interesting. They are sent out here with the idea that they may make their fortunes, and they frequently bring large sums to invest. As soon as they arrive they go into crazy speculations and wild extravagances, sending back to their parents for more money from time to time. One character of this kind was Dickie Bright, the grandson of the man for whom the "disease of the kidneys" was named. Dickie's father was rich, and he had supplied Dickie with money and sent him out here to grow up with the country. Dickie invested in a ranch and asked for large remittances from time to time on the plea of increasing his livestock.

At the same time he sent home florid stories of the money he was making and how he was fast becoming a cattle king. Shortly after one of his most enthusiastic letters he received a dispatch from New York saying that his father had just arrived there and that he was coming out to see him. The boy was in despair. He had spent his remittances in riotous living and he had no cattle to speak of. Adjoining him, however, was one of the largest cattle owners of the west. He confided in him and persuaded him to lend him a thousand head of his best stock for one night. When he made this request his neighbor asked what he wanted to do with the cattle. He replied:

"I shall put them in my corral, and when the old man comes I will show them as my herd. Dad can't stay but a day, and I will see that they are driven back safe to you the next morning."

The rancher was something of a sport himself, and he finally consented to help the boy out of his trouble. The cattle were sent over. Old Doctor Bright duly arrived, and he was driven out and shown the herd which Dickie said was only a sample of his stock, which he had brought in to show to his father. The boy added, however, that it was not good to keep the cattle penned up, and that they must go back upon the range right away. The old doctor was delighted and gave Dickie a check for \$10,000 to increase the business before he left. When he returned to England he boasted about the clubs how his boy had built up one of the biggest stock ranges in the west, and was making a fortune on the Canadian plains. In the meantime Dickie was luxuriating on his ten thousand dollars. It soon disappeared, and a little later he wrote to his father for more, saying that cold and disease had ruined his herd. As a result he was called back to England.

### Money in Ground Squirrels.

Another remittance boy added to his income by pretending to have a gold mine. His father had no idea that the word "gopher" meant much the same as ground squirrel, and when his boy wrote an enthusiastic letter saying that he had now a stock of 700 blooded gophers on his range he thought he was doing well. When he added that the animals were in good condition, but that it would take a thousand dollars more to keep them in shape for the market next spring, he sent on the money, evidently thinking that the gopher was some new breed of sheep or cattle.

Another young Englishman came here with an intense desire to learn ranching, and he had no sooner arrived than he got a place as a cowboy. He was anxious to begin work at once, so the second day after he came he was told to go out and roundup the lambs and get them in the corral for the evening. The young man started enthusiastically out. Dinner time passed and he had not returned. The hour for supper arrived, and he was still absent. A little

later he dragged himself into the house, dead. He was asked what he had done so long, and he replied that he had had a lot of trouble with the lambs, but that he had finally succeeded in getting all but two into the corral, but that those two ran so fast that he could not catch them. The other cowboys considered this strange, as the lambs are not hard to drive, so they took a lantern and went out to the corral. As they opened the door about a score of jack rabbits dashed past them. The young nobleman had mistaken jackrabbits for lambs, and had finally managed to get them inside the enclosure. I will not vouch for the truth of this story.

### Pupil Farmers.

This young man was a pupil farmer. Scores of such have been sent out from England to the United States and Canada to learn farming.

There are men who make a regular business of drumming up such students. They go to the rich families in different parts of Great Britain, and persuade them that there is great money in ranching and undertake to teach their sons the business for a consideration. The boys are charged all the way from a thousand dollars upward a year, for their instruction, and in some cases they are made to do the dirty work, to clean the stable, wash the dishes and labor early and late. As soon as they find out the deception they run off, but the money has been paid in advance, and the agent always comes out ahead. I heard of one young pupil farmer who was met the other day by a man who knew him when he first arrived in Calgary. He asked the boy how he liked the work and if he was still studying. The reply came quick:

"I am not. I chucked that job six months ago, and I now have two pupil farmers myself."

This same game was played in Iowa and Minnesota by several Englishmen some years ago. One of them brought over large numbers of boys at good prices. He had games and amusements to get money out of their pockets, teaching them to play polo and selling onions to them for the purpose. He made a small fortune before his frauds were discovered.

### Peter Naismith's Famous Race.

Speaking of the young Englishman's "jack rabbit" reminds me of the famous race. Peter Naismith, the manager of the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company of Lethbridge, tells of his experiences at Frankfort, where one of the Rocky mountains tipped over, burying a town and killing a large number of people.

This mountain was so delicately poised that an excavation a foot caused it to crack, and some millions of tons of earth slid off, covering the railroad track and changing the whole face of the country. The earth continued to rumble for days, and people from all parts of the country came to see the great convulsion of nature. It was just after the disaster that Peter Naismith went up to take a look at the ruins. As he stood in the midst of them a great groaning came from below him, and it looked as though a second slide was about to occur. All of the party ran for their lives, and Naismith faster than any. I asked him if he were frightened. He replied:

"I should say I was. I ran down that mountain as though all the furies were after me. Indeed, I ran so fast that one of the local papers said that on the way I broke a leg and was going at top speed, and gave him a kick, exclaiming as I did so:

"Get out of the way, blank you; and let somebody run who can run."

When it is remembered that a jack rabbit can outdistance the ordinary horse the strength of this remark is apparent.

### A Gold Brick Story.

As a rule order is good in the ranch country and confidence men comparatively scarce. The old stagers here are on the outlook for swindlers, but nevertheless some of the best of them are badly taken in. A recent story is told concerning the selling of a gold brick to a bank manager and newspaper editor of Calgary for the sum of \$12,000. The Canadian bankers are the shrewdest of their kind, and the manager of this branch at Calgary has been long in the business.

Nevertheless when an old man came into the bank a few months ago and told how he had discovered a gold mine in the Rockies and taken therefrom enough dust to form two large bricks, he listened. He also mentioned the fact to the editor, and the two again heard the story.

It was so full of details that they concluded it was true, and they went with the old miner to his claim, far away from the railroad in the wilds of the foot hills. When they reached there they found an Indian with a rifle guarding the cabin and saw unearched two big bars of gold. They were made to believe that the Indian meant business, and that if the gold was not taken as per contract their lives would probably be lost. The result was that they paid over the \$12,000 and took the bricks back to Calgary. Before describing their find they carried the gold to an assayer, who reported upon it as pure. They then announced their discovery, but others suspected that there might be a trick, and at their suggestion the gold was tested again. The second assay, by a new scientist, showed that the bricks were nothing but copper with a thin wash of gold on the outside. The swindlers dressed up for the occasion. As a result the manager of the bank lost his job, and I have been warned not to mention the words "gold brick" in the editor's hearing.

### Parson Barr and His Colony.

It is wonderful that there are not more swindlers perpetrated upon the new colonists. Those coming in from England are the greenest of the green, and it is only due to the government emigration bureau that they are taken care of. Take for instance the Barr colony. This consisted of 2,000 English men, women and children, brought in by a Canadian Episcopal minister, who wanted to establish a community which should contain nothing but Brits. The people arrived here in midwinter, and they were somewhat in at Saskatoon, where they left the railroad and began their 170-mile trek to their homes in the wilderness. Later on some became disgusted and flocked to the cities. Others remained and are gradually being ground up into good citizens.

Speaking of the ignorance of these colonists, numerous stories are told of their antics. One poor hooligan was instructed by the immigration agent how to handle his oxen, which were to carry his goods from Saskatoon across the prairie. He was told to hobble them at night so that they would graze freely; but also in such a way that they could not get far from the camp before morning. He was also told to lock his rear wagon wheels upon starting down a steep hill, and shown just how to do both. The immigrant said he understood, and started off. The first hill he came to he carefully hobbled his oxen and started down.

As a result the wagon ran over them; his wife and children and provisions were thrown out, and the animals considerably bruised.

After some time he got his team again harnessed and crossed the valley to go up the bluff upon the other side. He now

remembered the advice about locking the wheels, and put on the brakes and chains before starting. When asked why he locked his wheels on going up hill, he replied that he was afraid that the weight of the wagon would pull the oxen back the other way.

Another of these immigrants was disappointed in the quality of the land. He went out to look at his homestead, and then came to the colonization agents and told them that he was going back to the old country.

"What is the matter?" said the agent. "Why," replied the young man with a cockney accent, "that blooming land no good."

"I thought," said the agent, "that I save you a particularly fine tract. The soil must be good."

"Well," said the cockney, "I dug a hole to examine it, and what do you think I found. There was about a foot and a half of black loam on top, and below that nothing but bloody clai-"

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## THE FISHING SEASON.

Most Important Industry in the Northern Neck About to Open.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)

NORTHUMBERLAND CO., HEADQUARTERS, VILLE, VA., March 10.—As the spring fishing season draws near, the fishermen along the shores of the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers are busily engaged in making preparations on a large scale. Not only the fishermen are kept busy, however, but also the timbermen, who have to prepare and haul to the river

shores the thousands of necessary trap stakes.

As every one knows, who is at all acquainted with the Northern Neck, the fishing is by far the most important of all the industries of this section, as it brings in more ready cash among the people, than any other single line of business, and in this way it becomes most profitable to those directly engaged in it, but also to the people generally, as the money thus brought in increases business of all kinds. This year, says the fishermen, the indications point to a very successful season. The weather has been so mild all the entire winter that the season is expected to open up much earlier than usual, and in a few weeks now, the rivers will be once more filled with shad and herring, and the fishermen will be once more engaged in shipping their rich harvest to nearby markets.

Already the fishermen have begun to put out their stakes.

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